

VZCZCXRO5373  
PP RUEHBI RUEHCI RUEHDBU RUEHFL RUEHKW RUEHLA RUEHLH RUEHNEH RUEHNP  
RUEHPW RUEHROV RUEHSL RUEHSR  
DE RUEHTA #1250/01 2050731  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 240731Z JUL 09  
FM AMEMBASSY ASTANA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5875  
INFO RUCNCLS/ALL SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUCNCIS/CIS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 1788  
RUEHZL/EUROPEAN POLITICAL COLLECTIVE PRIORITY  
RUEHBJ/AMEMBASSY BEIJING PRIORITY 1155  
RUEHUL/AMEMBASSY SEOUL PRIORITY 0816  
RUEHKO/AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY 1857  
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEFAAA/DIA WASHDC PRIORITY  
RUEKJCS/JOINT STAFF WASHDC PRIORITY  
RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY 1340  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC PRIORITY 1252  
RUEHNO/USMISSION USNATO PRIORITY 2723  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 2405

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ASTANA 001250

SIPDIS

STATE FOR SCA/CEN, S/SRAP

E.O. 12958: DECL: 07/24/2019

TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [MARR](#) [AF](#) [KZ](#)

SUBJECT: KAZAKHSTAN OFFERS 'LOGISTICS BASE' FOR NORTHERN  
DISTRIBUTION NETWORK

REF: ASTANA 0557

Classified By: AMB. RICHARD E. HOAGLAND: 1.4 (B), (D)

11. (C) SUMMARY: During a meeting with USTRANSCOM Commander General Duncan McNabb, Kazakhstan's Security Council Deputy Chairman Nurlan Abdirov was pleased to learned that the United States has approved local procurement of non-lethal supplies along the Northern Distribution Network, including in Kazakhstan, for U.S. troops in Afghanistan. Abdirov commented that this decision, and the implementation of it, would pay economic and political dividends. At the same meeting, Kazakhstan offered a "logistics base," probably mostly for NDN containers of goods that tend to stack up at the port of Aktau. In fact, President Nazarbayev briefly mentioned such an idea on March 30 before crowding at the port of Aktau had become an occasional problem. Embassy Astana's DATT will follow up with appropriate ministries in Astana. If this comes to fruition, we should avoid calling the facility a base, since that could imply the presence of U.S. military personnel. END SUMMARY.

12. (C) During his visit to USTRANSCOM at Scott AFB in Illinois on July 14, Security Council Deputy Chairman Nurlan Abdirov told USTRANSCOM Commander General Duncan McNabb it is the intention of the top political leadership in Kazakhstan that the non-lethal supplies transported commercially through Kazakhstan as part of the Northern Distribution Network (NDN), especially those arriving by container at the port of Aktau, move smoothly and expeditiously without interruption or obstacle. General McNabb suggested USTRANSCOM would be willing to modulate the arrival of containers to prevent congestion problems at the port.

13. (C) Abdirov asked about the status of the United States procuring in Kazakhstan supplies for U.S. troops in Afghanistan, which he characterized as "both a political and economic issue." He pointed out that the stated intention of the United States to purchase supplies in Kazakhstan was one of the factors that had led President Nursultan Nazarbayev to approve quickly Kazakhstan's participation in the NDN. General McNabb responded that USCENTCOM Commander General David Petraeus had just recently signed a policy of support for the purchase of locally-produced products within the

countries supporting the NDN. Additionally, the Deputy Under Secretary of Defense for Logistics had just signed a waiver authorizing the purchase of goods in Kazakhstan and other Central Asian states, as well as in the Caucasus. We now need only to work out the details.

14. (C) Abdirov, obviously pleased, thanked General McNabb for this information and stated that the next step needs to be to establish a mechanism to implement the local purchase of supplies. He said the Government of Kazakhstan will take the lead in identifying Kazakhstani suppliers that will meet U.S. standards and that can deliver the products. Once a list of goods and quantities desired is developed, contracts can be executed. Abdirov emphasized the Government of Kazakhstan must take this lead role because the NDN agreement is a government-to-government agreement. General McNabb replied that every country has a different method of doing business, and the United States will work within Kazakhstan's framework.

15. (C) As the meeting seemed ready to conclude, Kazakhstan's Defense Attache in Washington, Colonel Mendygaliyev, asked for permission to speak. He said that President Nazarbayev requests that the United States consider establishing a "logistics base" in Kazakhstan as a temporary holding area for containers that sometimes stack up in the port of Aktau because of transportation delays in Uzbekistan. Clearly taken aback, Abdirov said he was unaware of such a request. He noted Nazarbayev had never discussed this with him and demanded a full briefing by Colonel Mendygaliyev. General McNabb commented that the United States would work with our

ASTANA 00001250 002 OF 002

shippers either to mitigate the backlog of containers in Aktau or to establish a temporary storage area.

16. (C) In an originally unscheduled follow-on meeting later the same day, Abdirov praised the waiver that will allow local procurement, noting that it is a good sign that "will pay economic and political dividends." He asked that the Government of Kazakhstan be notified by diplomatic note of the details of the waiver, and asked for a timeline for implementation of local purchase. General McNabb responded that we would personally call Admiral Thompson at the Defense Logistics Agency and assured Abdirov that within our government there was understanding at the highest levels of the importance of local procurement. Abdirov also said that he would welcome the visit of a group of experts to help move the process along. Clearly having reached a meeting of the minds with Colonel Mendygaliyev, and with whomever else he might have telephoned, Abdirov also asked that the United States respond via diplomatic note to the Government of Kazakhstan's offer to establish an NDN "logistics base" in Kazakhstan. Apparently assuming the United States would respond favorably, he suggested that the U.S. Defense Attache at Embassy Astana work with Kazakhstan's Ministries of Defense and Foreign Affairs to gain further details about Kazakhstan's proposal.

17. (C) COMMENT: Although Abdirov and Mendygaliyev used the term "logistics base," we need to use a term like "logistics facility" or "container holding area" to be clear to all we are not contemplating a facility with U.S. military personnel, should this proposal become reality. While it is very surprising that the defense attache made a policy proposal in the presence of the deputy chairman of the Security Council about which the deputy chairman was not briefed, this is something Nazarbayev has raised before, albeit briefly. In a meeting with the Ambassador on March 30 that included a long discussion on Afghanistan (reftel), Nazarbayev said, without elaborating, "We can play a most helpful role for you and for the interests of regional security and stability. We can be a base for logistical support for Afghanistan...." Subsequently, Presidential Foreign Policy Adviser Khairat Sarybay explained, to the extent he understood the president's thinking, Nazarbayev

likely meant that Kazakhstan could be "a storage location and source of supplies for the ISAF coalition in Afghanistan." After this current direct offer to USTRANSCOM, DATT will follow up with USTRANSCOM and with relevant Kazakhstani officials. We also note Abdirov's comment, that procuring supplies in Kazakhstan, as we originally offered when proposing that Kazakhstan become a part of the NDN, will pay "political dividends." That's how things are done here. When we occasionally do what Kazakhstan asks of us, we are somewhat more likely to get our various requests considered favorably. END COMMENT.  
HOAGLAND